



August 2017
Network

A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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[Acknowledgments:- George Legg. Leon & Lembit. Colin Brown. Bill Green. Julie Sperling. Plus anyone else I've forgotten]

EDITORIAL

During July I went to Bromsgrove to Observe the West Midlands MAG AGM. Particularly poignant for me because that meeting saw Eddie Lowe standing down as Regional Rep. I've known Eddie for a long time and he has been Rep & fighting for Riders' Rights forever. However, as his lovely wife's main carer he has found it more and more difficult to share his time. The Region still retains Eddie as its Treasurer and the Region is in good hands with Colin Brown at the helm as the newly elected Regional Rep.

I'm not even going to give my personal opinion on the Government statement of

banning the sale of petrol/diesel driven vehicles (very important that as they haven't said they are banning them but the 'sale of them') by 2040. I've seen various statements from non-governmental bodies which, in my humble opinion, were too hasty, however, apart from the fact I probably won't be around in 23 years time I think it won't happen. All that tax on fuel etc!!

What is worrying is this terrible trend of scooter/moped crime in London. I'm hopeful people can tell the difference between us and them.

Ride free, AG

Political Unit Network Update

Here's the latest from MAG's Political Unit (Dr Leon Mannings and Lembit Öpik) in the post-General Election period. Things have settled down to something a little closer to normal, and the re-engagement within the corridors of power continues.

1. A letter for all MPs congratulating them to Parliament was sent out from HQ thanks to a gigantic effort by Julie and Carol. We suggest regional reps and local activists follow up with your MPs – and a suggested letter is available – just ask. The more contact we have with local politicians, better it is for us as influencers when policy decisions are made.

2. Hot on the heels of a consultation about charging road users for making emissions, the issue has arisen again – and yes, it's in London. The latest mention occurs in the Draft London Transport Strategy, which is open to consultation till the 2nd October. It would be very helpful if you could add your voice to those asking that motorcycles are exempt. According to Transport for London's own figures, motorbikes produce so few emissions they are measured as ZERO percent of the total. Bikes are part of the solution, not the problem. Have a look at the consultation and make your response at:
- a. <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/policy/mayors-transport-strategy/?cid=mayors-transport-strategy>
 - b. And you'll find the bit on user charging being proposed for motorbikes on page 89. Much of the strategy is good for bikes, but the charging is not good. If you do reply, please try to welcome the positive parts while being clear about why you oppose user charging for motorcycles.
3. Former MAG Chair Paul Turner is now a Councillor in Cumbria. He's managed to get the Council to take potholes seriously, and we're hoping to expand this success nationwide. To find out more about this, read the next edition of The Road, which celebrates this success story. All you have to do is contact your local authority and they are pretty much obliged to fix the problem or face the consequences. Cllr Turner and Cumbria Council have made a huge leap forward in committing to replacing slippery – technically low friction - manhole covers with higher grip ones. This is a result of our campaign on this issue and Lembit's intervention in the area two years ago. You can do the same- and if you want a hand, just get in touch.
4. There have been signs of the rise of vigilantism in London to deal with the increasing yob behaviour of some idiots who steal mopeds and then use them to commit crimes. MAG is preparing a position statement on this, and it is important that we recognise that, while not surprising, vigilante attacks on the criminals is not MAG's policy in regard to these issues.
5. Up in Cumbria, MAG has been working with Sellafield management to seek adequate parking in the long term for the hundreds of riders who work there. It's a good example of practical support by MAG for the riding community, and the model can easily be rolled out in other places. To find out more, just get in touch with Lembit or Michael Armstrong in Cumbria.
6. In Northern Ireland, Martyn Boyd has been very active and has ensured an excellent advert in a magazine has been published to encourage people to join up. Good work, Martyn, you've really got things moving over there.
7. Lembit's looking forward to attending the Ilfracombe rally in September, as well as Yorkshire Pudding and the big Blackpool event which is in August. He also called through the Dead End Rally near Barrow in Furness – a fantastic example of a medium sized rally with heavy weight character. If you want Lembit to come along, make sure you ask via HQ, which is the right process.

8. In London, Lembit attended the Mayor's Question Time and sessions relating to the London transport policy. These meetings aren't glamorous but they're important as they keep MAG in the frame and we are recognised as having a voice for a significant proportion of the road using community.

9. Lembit attended a conference in London on the future of autonomous vehicles on 18th July 2017. Good contacts made but this is an on-going issue with the threat of segregated road space being the key one here. There is a general feeling that manual drivers should be restricted to 20mph and eliminated from the centre of cities while autonomous electric vehicles should replace them. Crucially, Matthew, Hudson, Head of Strategy, Technology and Data for TfL expressly said that autonomous vehicles will NOT get segregated space.

10. Meanwhile, Leon has been busy behind the scenes to ensure that MAG remains the focal point and in the loop regarding action that is being taken on behalf of bikers in the Capital by various groups.

Productive meetings and conversations have continued with the We Ride London (WRL) group and even included the Motorcycle Industry Association (MCIA) – who are privately recognising that Direct Action is needed to boost the impact of our lobbying work. And, Regional Rep Tim Fawthrop is liaising with the anti-theft groups.

11. For those who remember the Rainsford Road bike ban issue in Brent, MAG's controversial decision at the time to take a diplomatic route has been totally vindicated. Again, Tim has done great work in seeing this through along with Leon and the council have formally decided to proceed with a Bikes in Bus Lanes scheme – and our relationship with the council couldn't be better.

12. Leon has been particularly busy working on MAG's campaign to get the practical elements of the motorcycle driving test back on public roads. This has involved many conversations and informal meetings.

Having discussed MAG's plans and strategy with Chris Law MP (Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Motorcycle Group), Leon's first key meeting was with a good contact in the DfT who will be responsible for delivering the changes we want. This session was away from the Department and resulted in the officer being persuaded that there could be significant upsides for him and the future of biking if the relevant regulations can be 'refined' to end the ridiculous current situation whereby bike test can only be done at a handful of off road centres.

Another, series of conversations and meetings occurred with the MCIA to encourage them to support our campaign, or at least not impede progress. Taking a negative position is a possibility for the MCIA as many of their members involved with the testing and training side of the industry are making money out of the status quo. These talks have gone well so far and we are hopeful that this will continue.

The latest events on this front are the most encouraging of all. Leon met Chris Law in the House of Commons to discuss progress and to see if Chris was still able to help drive our campaign, which he is, but Chris felt the need for support from former APPMG Chair, Steve

Baker. Later in the evening, Leon had a chance encounter with Steve, who confirmed he would support our campaign.

Better still, Leon ran across former Transport Minister and MAG member Mike Penning MP who is totally committed to the aim of our campaign. The technicalities of parliamentary procedures for achieving our goal were discussed– and Mike has come up with a plan for doing so.

Once Chris had arrived back in Scotland for the summer break he called Leon to report that he had discussed Mike's plan and agrees that is the way to go. Chris then asked Leon to prepare an outline of the campaign for presentation to the APPMG when parliament reconvenes in September.

Please note that Central Office will be closed on Wednesday 30 August for training purposes. You can still email or leave a voicemail and the staff will be happy to contact you the following day.

MAG JULY PRESS RELEASES

MAG calls for a comprehensive approach to crime against bikers

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG), We Ride London and the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group are calling for an end to 'victim bashing.'

The Motorcycle Action Group's Regional Representative for Greater London, Tim Fawthrop, has raised concerns about how victims of motorcycle crime are being treated. After challenging the Mayor of London at a Question Time event following the murder of rider Ricky Hayden, who was killed by bike thieves, Tim said: 'at the Question Time just after the murder of Ricky Hayden, Mayor Sadiq Khan claimed that bike crime was partly the fault of the owners for not locking their bikes up properly. By that logic, homeowners are partly to blame if burgled because they have glass windows.'

Tim adds: 'we're told to secure our motorbikes and scooters to street furniture but even an enlightened Borough like Brent, which allows motorcycles in resident bays and elsewhere, won't invest in secure anchor points when they have such a limited budget. Also, when owners fasten their machines to lamp posts and so on, they often return to a parking ticket. And don't forget that 'bike- jacking' is a growing concern. Thieves have become increasingly violent: acid attacks, using machetes and fire extinguishers and common assault are now

prevalent.'

Mrs Penny Alexander, who works in the city, narrowly avoided an assault: 'I was attacked on the Old Kent Road recently as criminals tried to steal my bike whilst I was waiting at red lights. I got away – and then had to pay a fine for jumping the red lights. I'm in fear every day I ride my bike. It's just a question of time before it happens again – and perhaps I'm followed home and attacked for my bike".

Tim Fawthrop, said, "I start work at 6.00 am, nine miles from home. Public transport takes two hours - my motorbike takes thirty minutes. It's reasonable for me to expect to be able to make the trip without fear of attack or of having my bike stolen.'

Along with We Ride London and the Motorcycle Crime Reduction Group, MAG is calling for measures to be taken to improve the situation, with urgent action required by Government, local councils, the GLA, TfL and the IPCC.

It's official: Motorcycles Matter in London

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) broadly welcomes the Mayor's draft Transport Strategy as it includes better recognition of the positive role of motorcycling than any previous strategy proposals. MAG is also pleased that key recommendations from the GLA's 'Easy Rider' report are being adopted in the strategy as they reflect various aspects of input to the project by MAG.

Mayor Sadiq Khan and his Deputy for Transport, Val Shawcross, have clearly acknowledged a need to improve recognition of the useful role motorcycling can play in the transport mix. Tim Fawthrop, MAG's London Representative explains: 'The Mayor's strategy breaks new ground in viewing motorcycling as more than just an accident statistic.' This shows that MAG's engagement with Val Shawcross, in her former role as Chair of the London Assembly and now as Deputy Chair for Transport, has been worthwhile for all concerned, optimising the positive role of motorcycling and reducing rider casualties. Deputy Mayor Shawcross said publicly that there has been social prejudice against bikers and she wants to put it right. 'It's a very welcome comment' adds Tim.

Other good news relates to motorcycle access to bus lanes: a policy MAG has campaigned on for years. The strategy calls on 'all boroughs to allow motorcycle access to their bus lanes, to end the inconsistency between highway authorities that causes unnecessary confusion and risk to motorcyclists.' It is also intended that steps are taken to educate 'other road users on the shared responsibility for safer motorcycle journeys, through the promotion of driver and cyclist skills training and communications.' This includes supporting the police in targeting illegal and non-compliant behaviour that puts motorcyclists at risk, by using data to focus on the streets with a higher risk of motorcyclist collisions.'

The news for bikers from the draft is, nevertheless, mixed: proposals in the 'Healthy Streets Approach' are questionable. Whilst MAG can see the sense in aims to reduce 'reliance on private vehicles for personal travel, by providing Londoners with more opportunities for walking, cycling and using public transport', it questions the inclusion of reductions in motorcycle use. This is an undervalued option for modal shift from cars

and vans. However, the strategy does go on to state that 'Two-wheeled vehicles could play a more significant role in low-impact freight and servicing trips, especially where these vehicles replace trips by lorry or van and are made by ultra-low emission motorcycle.'

There is one other big bone of contention in the draft. Plans for the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) are deeply flawed by a proposal to charge some motorcycles the same £12.50 per day as cars. MAG sees this as particularly odd as TfL's own estimate of the proportion of NOx emissions by motorbikes is effectively zero – and modal shift from cars and vans to motorcycles is key to reducing emission and congestion problems.

Overall, the Mayor's plans offer long overdue progress for biking in London. MAG continues working with the Mayor, the Deputy and TfL to deliver sound outcomes – and they can consider MAG's team of Tim, Lembit and Leon as allies in that task. It's in everyone's interests to make this an effective partnership, especially because motorbikes help them achieve their own targets.

MAG commends tough sentencing of hooligans who abused motorcycles in Leeds

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) has applauded the stiff sentences handed out to the organisers of and participants in acts of hooliganism in Leeds and elsewhere on Halloween in 2016.

MAG has expressed its support for the jailing of thirteen thugs who used motorcycles to disrupt Leeds city centre last year. Together, they have been jailed for a total of almost fifteen years. Prison spells of between twelve months and two years were given to the organisers of the event, which saw more than a hundred riders on motorbikes and quad bikes disrupting traffic and riding through pedestrianised areas in Leeds.

One of the hooligans, David Armitage, who organized the event through social media, was filmed during the incident encouraging "carnage" and telling riders to "shut down" the city centre. He was jailed for two years.

Selina Lavender, MAG's Chair, has backed the verdict and the sentences. 'As senior police correctly observed last year, these people aren't bikers. They're just hooligans and idiots who happened to be on two wheels. MAG does not recognise or welcome such people as part of the biking community, and the sentences are an appropriate indication of the treatment people can expect if they disrespect the need for responsible use of bikes. Nobody involved came out of that incident in a good light.'

MAG is committed to working with the authorities and the law enforcement agencies to ensure that proper bikers are not dragged down by the idiotic antics of a reckless few yobs who thought it amusing to frighten and intimidate the general population. 'We love biking not trouble,' adds Selina. 'That's the genuine biker's charter, and it's at the heart and soul of the kind of riding MAG has promoted for over 40 years.'

Safer bikers in Wales

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) is pleased to note that the number of bikers killed or seriously injured (KSI) has fallen.

MAG can report that, according to figures released recently by Road Safety GB, the number of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured in Wales during 2016 fell by 7%. This represents the biggest improvement in KSI statistics in Wales, outstripping figures for pedestrians and cyclists who, along with motorcyclists, are classed as vulnerable road users.

MAG Chair, Selina Lavender, said “this is good news on a number of levels: less KSI means not only fewer families suffering the distress of losing a loved one, but also shows that bikers are riding responsibly and taking care on the roads of Wales”.



Figures are currently unavailable for England due to a lack of validated data from the Metropolitan Police for November and December. Work is under way to rectify this.

Meanwhile, MAG welcomes the evidence showing that, in Wales at least, the “ride safe” message is getting across.

Contact MAG at 01926 844 064 or central-office@mag-uk.org

Birmingham Jewellery Quarter Controlled Parking Zone Consultation

There is currently a consultation taking place for on street parking in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter.

Currently there is a combination of pay & display bays, permit holder bays and free bays. The Council are proposing to make all free bays either pay & display or permit holder bays.

As bikers pay and display does not work for us, so in effect this move will remove any provision for on street parking of PTW's in the Jewellery Quarter.

MAG has responded to the consultation requesting that the issue is addressed and the opportunity taken to introduce a dedicated motorcycle bay with secure parking facilities. An initial response to the proposal from Peter Bethell (Principal Transportation Officer) has confirmed that this suggestion will be considered and goes on to ask where we would consider a dedicated PTW parking bay could best be located.

This looks like a positive step towards Birmingham City Council providing its first fit for purpose on street secure PTW parking facilities, but to really secure this we need your help.

Peter Bethell has requested that responses are sent to the survey at www.birmingham.gov.uk/jparking. You will see however that there is a separate survey for each street in the Jewellery Quarter (22 in all!), so this will be a bit laborious. We would suggest therefore that you simply email comments to parkingconsult@birmingham.gov.uk

Please email with details of your preferred location for a dedicated PTW parking bay, but be sure to comment that the bay needs to provide secure parking facilities (ground anchors or rails) and ideally “captured chain” stations with helmet storage lockers. Feel free to suggest that the facilities should be provided free of charge and that they should ideally be covered by CCTV cameras and clearly signposted both at the location and with directional signs as you enter the Jewellery Quarter area.

It is really important that a good number of responses are sent so that the Council cannot just conclude that there is no real demand for these facilities. Don't let this opportunity go to waste.

Responses need to be sent by 11th August 2017, so get emailing!

You may find the link below helpful. It lays out the Code of Practice for surface dressing roads. I bet there isn't one of us who hasn't had a scary moment on a road surface recently dressed with massive amounts of loose gravel. The document is 18 pages long so I couldn't replicate it here, however, a copy of this would possibly be handy to keep for reference in Regions/Groups. Colin Brown, West Mids Rep.

<https://www.rsta-uk.org/downloads/RSDA-Code-of-Practice.pdf>



The Price of Electricity?

The government announced this week that sales of new petrol and electric vehicles will be phased out by 2040 (not exactly news as we are already committed to this under the Paris Climate Agreement 2016 but, hey, why not brag about it?). This is not even that radical – India will ban them by 2030. Before then plans are being drawn up to increase taxation on older, more polluting vehicles plus a possible scrappage scheme to encourage owner to switch to “cleaner” modes of transport. A big advantage seems to be the lower running costs with around 3p a mile being touted for electric cars, much less for a motorcycle. So are we looking forward to a new world of cheap driving/biking? Not necessarily.

At present, the government earns £28 billion a year from fuel duty – that's about 50p for every pound spent on petrol or diesel. An electric car charged from the grid will currently generate just 5p in VAT for every pound spent. If the car is charged directly from solar

panels on a garage roof, the Treasury is likely to go empty-handed. That's a big chunk to lose from public finances. To help plug the gap, the Treasury could increase VAT on energy to 20% - not likely to be popular with homeowners. Vehicle Excise Duty (Road tax) could be increased, including that on electric vehicles which are currently exempt. However, this is a tax on car ownership which is unlikely to be popular, especially with green campaigners, who would prefer to tax the use of cars. With Vehicle Excise Duty you pay the same whether you're clocking up 100 000 miles a year or it's just sitting in your garage. It's unfair and, more importantly to some minds, it's inefficient.

We've all sat in traffic jams and like you I've also had the pleasure of cutting through them on my bike. A traffic jam is essentially a queue for a limited resource – road space. In Europe this fact has been recognised for many years and they've addressed it through "road pricing", otherwise known as toll roads. Travel along French or Italian motorways and you'll be used to shelling out for the privilege. In this country we've never taken to the idea, with the exception of the M6 toll and a few bridges.

However, faced with losing the equivalent of 2/3 of the national defence budget long-term, planners are reconsidering the idea. It has its advantages over a flat Road Tax.

1. You only pay for what you use. Occasional users would not be "subsidiising" heavy users. Harking back to the old wartime poster "Is Your Journey Really Necessary", it would force you to think about how often you use your vehicle, much the same as the price of fuel does now.
2. It can be targeted to reduce congestion. As with train tickets now, you would pay less to travel "off peak". This combined with driverless technology would move most long-distance freight haulage to the middle of the night. It could also target "rat-runs" by simply putting up the price to travel on them. It is infinitely flexible.
3. It'll be fairly easy to implement. Unlike the continentals, we've skipped the awkward necessity of building toll booths and could monitor the movement of each vehicle via GPS. All you would receive is a monthly bill. This may raise concerns about the invasion of privacy that this would entail. It is worrying but let's face it, you're kidding yourself if you think that your every movement isn't tracked already through CCTV, ANPR and that GPS in your satnav and phone.

Like it or not, we're living through a 'transport revolution' at the moment, where the basic ground rules are being rewritten. Road pricing is only an idea but it's being taken seriously in some quarters. Where motorcycles will figure in this brave new world no-one can tell yet. Luckily we've got MAG keeping its eye on the situation to make sure that bikers get a fair look in.

Bill Green, North West MAG.

Stingers deployed to stop moped crime – The Times



The use of spikes against motorcycles was authorised two years ago, but they have “rarely” been used. ALAMY

Police have been authorised to put down stinger devices to stop mopeds and motorcycles amid a large increase in bikes being used for crime, including acid attacks.

In the past few years more criminal gangs have been using them for ramming and raiding jewellery stores as well as robbing pedestrians.

The National Police Chiefs Council confirmed it carried out risk assessments regarding the use of stingers, which use spikes to deflate tyres and slow down cars, on motorcycles two years ago. The tactic was then authorised across the country but has been used “rarely”, the NPCC said.

Tim Rogers, pursuits lead for the Police Federation of England and Wales, said he expected the tactic to be used more often given the explosion of motorcycle and moped related crime, which has increased 1,600 per cent in London over the past five years. The tactic would still be a “last resort”, Mr Rogers said, adding: “We will do everything we can to make sure the person doesn’t get injured but if they engage in dangerous activity, that’s their responsibility.”

In response to a Freedom of Information request, the NPCC acknowledged that its guidance had strengthened because of the “exposed risks and potential harm” to other road users by riders who behaved badly and dangerously.

Ian Malone, editor of bikerandbike.co.uk, said the measure had caused anger in the biker community because it was considered dangerous. He supported its use against criminals but said the NPCC’s testing was flawed because the stingers were deployed against police riders who were more experienced than moped or motorcycle users.

This content is from <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/stingers-deployed-to-stop-moped-crime-b6csdc2vr>

AROUND GB

Edinburgh prepares for phase three of 20mph rollout

Primary school children in Edinburgh have been creating 20mph-themed artwork in support of the ongoing rollout of 20mph roads across the city.

Phase one of the scheme went live in July 2016. At the time, the council said the new limits are aimed at increasing safety for all road users as well as creating a calmer, more people-friendly environment in shopping and residential streets.

Phase three of the project, covering areas west of the city such as Clermiston and Clovenstone, is due to come into effect on 16 August. Preparations are already underway, including the erection of new signs.

In anticipation of the launch, children from the local Flora Stevenson's Primary School have been producing 20mph-themed posters to 'drive home the message that slower speeds are safer'.

Slogans used by the children include '30's dirty - so don't do it; 20's plenty - so do it', and 'Go slow - 20's plenty'.

City of Edinburgh Council says driving more slowly reduces the number and severity of casualties, adding that a person is seven times more likely to survive if they are hit by a car driving at 20mph, than if they are hit at 30mph.

Cllr Lesley Macinnes, transport and environment convener, said: "These pupils have done a great job creating some really eye-catching artwork urging drivers to watch their speed.

"With children, older people and those with mobility or sensory issues most at risk from excessive speeds, it's a no-brainer to introduce 20mph in residential and shopping streets across the city, as well as the city centre, as we work towards Vision Zero where everyone is kept safe from the risk of being killed or seriously injured on our roads.

"If you live or work in the Phase 3 area, look out for the new 20mph signs going up in the coming weeks, ahead of the new limit coming into force on 16 August."

Irene Brennan, recently retired head teacher of Flora Stevenson's Primary School, said: "20mph is a huge benefit to children at Flora Stevenson's school because we're on an extremely busy crossroads and if the traffic is slowed down then it gives the children a better opportunity to judge the speed of traffic for crossing.

"Obviously children are more badly hurt if they get hit by a car travelling at 30 than a car travelling at 20 so I think it's really important in the city that we do slow down and look after the children."

In June 2017, researchers at the University of Edinburgh launched a new study which will evaluate the impact of 20mph speed limits in two British cities - Belfast and Edinburgh - over the next three years.

City of Edinburgh:

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/2326/kids_urge_edinburgh_drivers_to_slow_down_as_signs_go_up_for_20mph_phase_three

[Personally, I think PTWs should be included in the following]

POTHOLEs – Experiment in Wiltshire and York.

Buses and bikes join 'pioneering' bin lorry trial

A 'pioneering' project designed to help councils adopt a 'smarter' approach to highway repairs by identifying potential potholes, is to be extended and expanded.

Launched in February, the DfT funded ‘pothole-spotter’ trial has seen high-definition cameras, integrated navigation system and intelligent software installed on refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) in Thurrock.

Data from the trial is already being used to help inform the council’s road maintenance and repair strategy.

As a result of the initial success in Thurrock, the trial is now being rolled out in York and Wiltshire, with an expanding portfolio of vehicles and approaches to data capture.

Soenecs and Gaist, the two private-sector organisations leading the scheme, say the addition of buses and bikes will help capture a ‘rich and varied’ data set.

Dr David Greenfield, of Soenecs, said: “The new vehicles and routes will enable us to gather significantly more data to assist in preventing potholes, whilst exploring road safety issues for more vulnerable road users, such as cyclists.”

The new pilot areas were selected for their unique characteristics. York has one of the highest number of cycle journeys in the country, in addition to high traffic volumes, particularly in the peak summer tourist season.

In Wiltshire, the data collected will be illustrative of a typical rural area with large volumes of heavy agricultural traffic.

Bridget Wayman, cabinet member for highways and waste, at Wiltshire Council, said: “As we continue to invest over £20m a year in highways to get rid of a historic backlog of maintenance, we look ahead to find new ways of avoiding potholes and other defects on our roads.

“We have a good track record of innovation in Wiltshire, and I’m delighted we can help with this trial. I look forward to sharing how it worked with colleagues in other local authorities.”

All the vehicles deployed for the project will frequently survey the same stretch of road to create a detailed data bank illustrating the development of road problems over a much shorter time frame than has previously been possible.

Pot Hole Spotter: <http://www.pothole-spotter.co.uk/>

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

New campaign targets leisure riders in south east England

Highways England is currently running a motorcycle safety campaign in south east England, as part of a wider campaign to reduce all road casualties in the region.

Highways England points to data showing that motorcyclist killed or seriously injured (KSI) casualties in the south east are higher in comparison to other regions.

The target audience for the campaign, which is co-branded with THINK!, is leisure riders, defined by Highways England as ‘those who are riding for pleasure on large bikes (500cc+) and are an older males (35-55 years’).

These motorbike enthusiasts are described as a socially diverse group, with motorcycling likely to be the only thing the majority of the group have in common.

Research shows that May to August appears to be the peak time for performance motorbike related KSI collisions in the south east, with 44 of the 94 KSI casualties among performance bike riders in 2014 occurring during this four month period – the highest of any period.

The four-week campaign reminds leisure bikers of the key behaviours that contribute to KSIs in the south east: cornering, speeding, overtaking and fatigue.

The campaign assets are available free of charge for stakeholders to use and distribute. Resources include three videos and four posters featuring messaging on speeding, cornering, overtaking and fatigue. Links to all the resources are included at the foot of this news piece.

The campaign went live on Sunday 18 June with a launch event at Ryka's café in Box Hill, a popular venue with bikers from around the region.

In an email to stakeholders, Annemarie Hennessy, senior marketing manager with Highways England, said: "We engaged with a large number of bikers on the day and they were all very receptive to the safety advice we provided. Initial evaluation puts the number of conversations with bikers at 306 across the day."

The campaign also featured in an ITV Meridian news report on 29 June. Please do share this widely as it is a great kick start to the campaign.

The campaign is running across:

- Digital out of home media (motorway service station, forecourts) • Social media – sponsored Facebook advertising
- Proactive social media via Highways England's own channels
- The THINK! motorcycling webpage
ITV Meridian: <http://www.itv.com/news/meridian/update/2017-06-27/campaign-to-reduce-motorcycle-crashes/>
- THINK! : <http://think.direct.gov.uk/motorcycles.html>

Campaign resources:

Videos

Speeding: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKqMO50PkXg>

Cornering: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjgxuMbAxkE&feature=youtu.be>

Overtaking: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8s6sc0qpIBq>

Posters for print use

Born to be wild: <http://assets.highways.gov.uk/Campaigns/BornToBeWild+print.pdf>

Easy rider: <http://assets.highways.gov.uk/Campaigns/Easy+Rider+print.pdf>

Live fast: <http://assets.highways.gov.uk/Campaigns/LiveFast+print.pdf>

Ride forever: <http://assets.highways.gov.uk/Campaigns/Ride+Forever+print.pdf>

Posters for online use

Born to be wild: <http://assets.highways.gov.uk/Campaigns/BornToBeWild+fullbleed.pdf>

Easy rider: <http://assets.highways.gov.uk/Campaigns/Easy+Rider+fullbleed.pdf>

Live fast: <http://assets.highways.gov.uk/Campaigns/LiveFast+full+bleed.pdf>

Ride forever: <http://assets.highways.gov.uk/Campaigns/Ride+Forever+fullbleed.pdf>

DVLA coding challenge sets sights on active travel

Launched by the DVLA in June, the challenge is open to 7-11 year olds and is supported by Road Safety Wales and Brake, among others.

The challenge is to build a game using SCRATCH (a coding language) and is designed to help interested pupils develop problem solving, communication and teamwork skills - as well as improving their knowledge of computer programming.

Two of the competition's four themes focus on road safety related issues:

- Build a game that highlights how young people can spot hazards and stay safe while cycling
- Build a game of how the world would look if there weren't any cars on the road

Mark Jones, DVLA head of cyber security testing, said: "It's important that as employers we actively support the development of IT skills in schools and communities, from grassroots early education upwards."

Teams of up to five pupils from schools and community-based code clubs are being invited to participate in the competition.

Entries must be submitted by 6 October, with those shortlisted invited to attend the DVLA Code Challenge 2017 prize day at DVLA's digital theatre in Swansea on 28 November.

The best entries will receive prizes of IT equipment up to the value of £3,000 for use in their school. Click here for more information on how to enter.

DVLA: <http://dvlacodechallenge.dvla.gov.uk/>

Road Safety Wales: <http://www.roadsafetywales.org.uk/news/?Language=undefined>

[So, here you have it – the selfishness of some drivers]

RAC 'surprised' at findings of new mobile phone survey

A new survey by the RAC suggests that just three in five of drivers who use a handheld mobile phone at the wheel would stop doing so if they caused a collision as a consequence.

The RAC says it is 'surprised' the figure is not 'significantly higher' given the potential consequences of a collision.

Conducted as part of the RAC's Be Phone Smart campaign, the survey gave respondents - all of whom admitted to using a mobile phone illegally - a range of scenarios which might stop them committing the offence.

At 60%, being personally responsible for causing an accident came top, followed by being caught by the police (55%), knowing the victim of an accident where handheld phone use was a factor (54%) and causing a near-miss (53%).

The RAC says the findings suggest a 'sizeable minority of drivers still do not see anything wrong with using a handheld phone illegally, because they believe they are not likely to cause an accident or be stopped by the police'.

The results appear to be at odds with an earlier survey carried out for the 2016 RAC Report on Motoring in which 86% of motorists who admitted to using a handheld phone claimed they would be willing to give up the habit for good.

In that survey, drivers said the police would have the biggest influence on them stopping (25% of respondents), leading the RAC to suggest that 'enforcement of the law is key to getting motorists to change their ways'.

Pete Williams, RAC spokesperson for the Be Phone Smart campaign, said: "It seems reasonable to expect that causing an accident while using a handheld phone would be enough to force every driver to change their ways. But our data suggests otherwise – while six in 10 motorists told us they thought that would motivate them to kick the illegal habit, that indicates a remarkable four in 10 didn't think it would."

"Handheld phone use has become rooted in the behaviour of some drivers and it is going to take a herculean effort to change their mindset.

"No single action will achieve this. We need a combination of education so drivers understand the dangers, and rigorous enforcement so those breaking the law can expect to get caught.

"There have been some positive changes in recent months. Alongside the new tougher penalties, police forces are giving the offence greater focus with regular high-profile operations targeting offenders.

"As our research shows that the actions of the police could be key in making drivers change their ways, this has to be very welcome."

Jesse Norman MP, recently appointed road safety minister, said: "It is shocking that so many people still use handheld phones at the wheel, which is why I'm calling on families and friends to make it as socially unacceptable as drink driving."

RAC Campaign: <https://www.rac.co.uk/press-centre/#/pressreleases/only-three-in-five-drivers-who-use-a-handheld-phone-say-causing-an-accident-would-make-them-kick-the-habit-2057064>

RAC Report: <https://www.rac.co.uk/report-on-motoring/report-on-motoring-2016/2-0-road-safety/2-1-a-rise-in-phone-fears>

Smartphone Campaign: <https://bephonesmart.uk/>

'No idling zones' focal point of new air quality guidance

Local councils are being encouraged to implement a ‘no vehicle idling’ policy around places such as schools and hospitals.

The idea is part of new guidance developed by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and Public Health England (PHE) to improve air quality across England.

Published today (30 June), the guidance says no-idling zones could be used to decrease exposure to pollution at locations where the most vulnerable road users congregate - including schools, hospitals and care homes - adding that bylaws could be introduced as a way to enforce these zones.

The move has been welcomed by stakeholders, including the RAC who says that no-one should have to suffer dirty air as a result of a driver leaving their engine on unnecessarily.

Other measures included in the NICE guidance include:

- Replace speed bumps with blanket 20mph speed limits in urban areas
- Line cycle routes and walkways with trees to protect from fumes
- Roll out congestion charges across city centres
- Introduce variable speed limits on sections of motorways
- Introduce electronic signs telling drivers the ideal speed in the area to avoid stop-starting

PHE estimates long-term exposure to particulate air pollution has ‘an effect equivalent to’ around 25,000 deaths a year in England. Road traffic is estimated to contribute more than 64% of air pollution in towns and cities.

Professor Paul Lincoln, chair of the NICE guidelines committee, said: “Air pollution is a major risk to our health, and measures suggested so far have not managed to tackle the problem sufficiently.”

“This guidance is based upon the best evidence available. It outlines a range of practical steps that local authorities can take, such as the implementation of no-idling zones, to reduce emissions and protect the public.”

Nick Lyes, RAC roads policy spokesman, said: “We welcome the principle of no-idling zones, especially outside schools, hospitals and care homes. No-one should have to suffer dirty air as a result of a driver leaving their engine on unnecessarily. Sadly, many drivers don’t realise the harm they are causing by doing this.”

“Schools should work closely with local authorities to first encourage parents to switch their engines off. It’s right that those that then persist in leaving them on should be subject to a charge.”

“While it is going to take a combination of different actions to rid our towns and cities of dirty air, introducing no-idling zones is one simple step that we can do now that can lead to cleaner air for all of us.”

Nice: <http://indepth.nice.org.uk/no-idle-zones-can-help-protect-vulnerable-people-from-air-pollution-says-nice/index.html>

Nice Guidance: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng70>

Local authorities to benefit from ‘landmark’ investment strategy

Local roads are set to benefit from a new multi-billion pound improvement fund, unveiled by the DfT today (5 July).

The transport investment strategy sets out a new long-term approach for Government infrastructure spending - including funding for local authorities to improve, or replace, A roads under their management.

The strategy aims to improve productivity and connectivity of towns and cities as well as tackling bottlenecks and traffic jams. It also seeks to take away the 'misery' of lorries and through-traffic 'thundering' through rural villages on main roads.

Transport secretary Chris Grayling says the new approach is designed to 'make transport work for the people who use it'.

Stakeholder reaction

The transport investment strategy also plans for a new 'rebalancing' measure, which will judge how investment programmes contribute to a more balanced economy, and prioritises investment that increases productivity or growth, improves reliability and tackles congestion.

Further plans include the creation of the 'Major Road Network' with access to a multi-billion pound road fund, funded by Vehicle Excise Duty (VED), for improvements such as bypasses.

Chris Grayling said: "Getting transport spending right is crucial for the country's future.

"The transport investment strategy sets out a blueprint for how we can harness the power of transport investment to drive balanced economic growth, unlock new housing projects, and support the government's modern industrial strategy.

"At the heart of our approach is a plan to make transport work for the people who use it and for the wider economy."

Stakeholder reaction

The RAC says the announcement is 'good news' for motorists across the UK - adding that many are currently in the dark about where responsibility lies for the building and maintenance of local A-roads

Nicholas Lyes, RAC roads policy spokesman, said: "While motorways and major A-roads are benefitting from dedicated funding and have a future funding plan in place through vehicle excise duty receipts, local authorities have struggled to cope with fixing and upgrading those A-roads which come under their control.

"We hope today's announcement of a Major Road Network will lead to significant investment with a programme of new local road projects tackling some of the country's worst congestion hot-spots and pinch-points which will benefit business and private motorists alike and act as a stimulus to economic growth."

Gov.UK: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-transport-investment-plan-for-britain>

LORDS DEBATE:

motorcycle : 1 Lords debate

Damages (Personal Injury) Order 2017 - Motion to Regret (18 Jul 2017)

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/lords/?id=2017-07-18a.1598.0&s=Motorcycle#g1598.2>

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts: ...2.5% to minus 0.75%. What is the effect of this rather arcane statement? A simple example may help clarity. Let us assume that you are a 25 year-old young man who has, sadly, been catastrophically injured in a ***motorcycle*** accident. The court must consider what sum is needed to look after you for the rest of your life—that is, probably more than 40 years. If the court concluded that on...

Department for Transport

Written Answers - Department for Transport: Parking: Pedestrian Areas (19 Jul 2017)

<https://www.theyworkforyou.com/wrans/?id=2017-07-11.4417.h&s=Road+Safety#g4417.r0>

Jesse Norman: Local authorities are responsible for assessing the needs of all ***road*** users in their areas and for implementing appropriate traffic management measures. If a local authority considers that the ***safety*** of pedestrians in a particular location is compromised by pavement parking they have the powers necessary to deal with it through a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). As part of our discussions...

Concern over Finnish proposals to weaken traffic law

The Finnish road safety authority, Liikenneturva, has criticised a government proposal to weaken a number of key aspects of road safety.

The proposals include a revision to Finland's world-renowned system of linking fines for traffic offences to income known as the 'day fine'. The government's proposal is in future to only apply the system in cases where the speed limit has been exceeded by 30 km/h or more.

Liikenneturva has pointed out that this change could have serious consequences in particular for urban areas, where small increases in speed can have a severe impact on collision outcomes.

Cycling helmet rules could also be weakened according to the proposals. Finland currently requires cyclists to wear a helmet, but failure to do so is not sanctioned. The government plans to remove the legal obligation altogether. Liikenneturva says that, despite the lack of sanctions, the Finnish helmet law has been effective, especially in increasing helmet use among school children. The organisation says helmets are an important way of cutting deaths among cyclists and that there is no evidence that the helmet law has discouraged cycling.

The revised law is currently subject to consultation before being sent to the Finnish Parliament.

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